



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Carlson, Mital, Helgeson, Schlossberg and Brown
FROM: Sue Fahey, Assistant General Manager/Chief Financial Officer,
Rene Gonzalez, Customer Solutions Manager and
Anna Wade, Business Line Manager
DATE: January 22, 2019
SUBJECT: Limited Income Program Updates
OBJECTIVE: Information Only

Issue

This correspondence is provided to update the Board on the implementation of limited income program changes and the development of utility and program metrics related thereto.

Background

Limited Income programs provided by EWEB have undergone realignment with the strategic plan in recent months. This effort is ongoing and includes notable progress such as:

- Successful discontinuation of EWEB Customer Care Plus (ECCP) –The administrative and delivery costs associated with ECCP were prohibitively high. Over 750 income qualifying customers received a close-out credit, delivered in December at the start of the heating season.
- Educational program content for limited income customers has been revamped with a focus on conservation, pricing, available programs and emergency preparedness. Ongoing savings from the close of ECCP has provided funding in absence of budget expansion.
- Expansion of weatherization incentives to promote energy efficiency in rentals. Limited income occupied properties will be eligible to receive the same incentives as owner occupied. Previously, limited income rentals were limited to 50% eligible costs where owner occupied qualified for 100% of eligible costs.
- EWEB Customer Care Process Improvements
 - Categorical income verification has been used for approximately 25% of recipients since the start of the heating season, relieving applicants of multiple certification appointments.
 - Mail-in application option for senior and disabled customers, beginning in February.
 - Streamlined invoicing and account reconciliation with Lane County has reduced processing time for both agencies, lowering service fees and overhead.
- Home Energy Audits – Prioritizing limited income customers and implementing technological advancements to improve customer experience and operational efficiency.

- Staff Safety – Field Staff will adopt operating procedures for location check-in and emergency radio communication with Security personnel.

Discussion

Meaningful reduction in customers’ Energy and/or Peak Burdens will demand the cumulative and utility-wide efforts relating to affordability, customer experience and effective rate design, among others. The Board will be updated on progress toward these, and other goals which affect limited income customers throughout the year.

Energy Burden: EWEB strives to reduce the proportion of a customer’s income that is required to cover utility expenses, ensuring that the cost of vital services is manageable customers.

Goal: Reduce non-payment based residential service disruptions (disconnects).

<i>Current disconnects per month:</i>	<i>2019 Target</i>	<i>2023 Target</i>
525	10% reduction	50% reduction

Peak Burden: EWEB intends to promote payment options to customers in an effort to mitigate the effects of the peak heating season on bill volatility.

Goal: Convert bill assistance recipients to a level payment plan.

<i>Current recipients:</i>	<i>2019 Target</i>	<i>2023 Target</i>
2.3%	15%	50%

Crisis Relief: The utility acts as steward of customer revenues, including those allocated to limited income bill assistance. As such, EWEB Customer Care Program metrics are anchored to cost containment and prudent program scope.

Goal: Provide annual crisis relief to limited income customers while limiting contracted administrative and delivery costs to 18.5% or less.

<i>2018 Administrative cost est.</i>	<i>2019 Target</i>	<i>2023 Target</i>
32%	<= 18.5%	<= 18.5%

Energy Efficiency Education: Staff are prepared to begin delivering targeted information to customers, empowering them with the knowledge to reduce utility costs and increase in-home comfort. In doing so, EWEB will identify opportunities to meet conservation and carbon goals as well as customer confidence.

Goal: Perform in-home audits and deliver educational program content and emergency/efficiency kits to limited income customers, encouraging participation in EWEBs energy efficiency programs.

<i>Current</i>	<i>2019 Target</i>	<i>2023 Target</i>
Audits & Education: New Program	500 customers annual	2500 total audits
LI Conservation: 14% residential MWh	17%	22%

Recommendation and Requested Board Action

This update is provided for informational purposes only. No action requested at this time.